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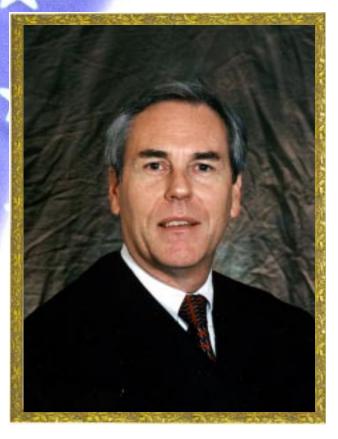
# Superior Court Of California County of Fresno

#### **2001 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**



Standing from left: Tamara L. Beard, Court Executive Officer (non-voting); Hon. Ralph Nunez; Hon. Gregory Fain; Hon. Donald Black; and Hon. Timothy Kams

Sitting from left: Hon. Gene Gomes; Hon. Gary D. Hoff, Presiding Judge; and Hon. Brad R. Hill, Assistant Presiding Judge



# REPORT OF THE PRESIDING JUDGE

#### Judge Gary D. Hoff

The Superior Court of Fresno County is dedicated to serving our community in a manner that will enhance public trust and confidence in the administration of justice. We endeavor to do this through impartial and timely resolution of disputes and by ensuring that there is compliance with court directives. We also seek to foster a court-community relationship that allows us to partner with many other agencies and groups in an effort to identify

and provide the services that the public expects and deserves from our local court system.

The California Judicial Council has established six strategic goals for the state courts. Each goal comes within the Fresno County Superior Court's Mission Statement. The achievements of our Court in the year 2001 demonstrate our continued efforts to be effective in all aspects of our court operations. Our continued collaboration with many justice agencies and other community partners in a variety of endeavors demonstrates our willingness to be creative in finding solutions to problems that face our Court. These are challenges that cannot, and should not, be solved by the court itself. The Court belongs to the community, and community input is necessary to establish short-term and long-range plans that reflect the Judicial Council's strategic goals, addresses the public's ever increasing demands for services and prioritizes our use of existing manpower and financial resources.

This Annual Report, our sixth edition, is presented in a new format. This report sets forth our achievements over the past year as they relate to established statewide goals. Our success can only be measured by our effectiveness and efficiency and our ability to carry out our responsibilities in a manner which reflect our core values. Our values embrace the following principles: ensure and maintain justice according to the law, provide equal access to the court, commit to the highest ethical standards, and ensure courtesy to, respect for, and dignity of all individuals.

The achievements in 2001 model our values, demonstrate our ability, with the support of our many partners, to improve our justice system and reinforce our commitment to fulfill our mission of effectively serving the community.

#### REPORT OF THE COURT EXECUTIVE OFFICER

#### Tamara L. Beard

I am constantly amazed at how much this Court continues to grow. At any one time we are involved in at least thirty large improvement projects - in recruitment, technology, public outreach, education, grant writing, dispute resolution, juror services, etc. It seems that



our fingers are in so much that we cannot possibly take on another project! Just when we think we are stretched to the limit, we start brainstorming on how to do something else better, more efficiently, less expensively. Once again, we are renewed with enthusiasm and undertake yet another venture. How we love to compete with ourselves, to go where few have been before. I suppose that is what separates those who lead the charge and those who follow. The Superior Court of Fresno County is certainly a progressive and proactive court – a leader.

We certainly do not claim to be perfect – we have a number of areas in which we need to make changes. However, we will address them. We also recognize that as both internal and external forces change, so must this organization and those within it. We will not rest on our laurels nor allow contentment to replace our quest to advance.

I would like to personally thank our Presiding Judge, Gary Hoff, Assistant Presiding Judge, Brad Hill, our 2001 Executive Committee – Judges Gene Gomes, Ralph Nunez, Donald Black, Gregory Fain, Timothy Kams – for both encouraging and supporting this Court's efforts to go farther, think bigger and broader, not limit ourselves in our pursuits. I would also like to thank the best assistant administrators, managers, supervisors and staff - those who actually make dreams come true, turn model programs into standard practice for others to emulate.

#### **Fresno County Superior Court Functions**



Judge Dale Ikeda's Investiture



Judge Gary Orozco's Investiture



Judge Debra Kazanjian's Investiture



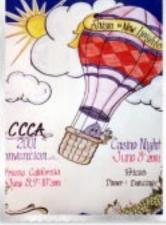
Judge Denise Whitehead's Investiture



Judge James Quaschnick's Retirement Dinner



Judge James Quaschnick's Retirement Dinner



2001 California Court Clerks' Association Convention



2001 California Court Clerks' Association Convention



Judge James Quaschnick's Retirement Dinner



Court Clerks' Association Convention Attendees



2001 Court-Community Forum



Judge James Quaschnick's Retirement Dinner

#### FRESNO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT



#### MISSION STATEMENT



THE SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF FRESNO, WILL SERVE THE COMMUNITYAND ENHANCE PUBLIC TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE BY THE IMPARTIAL AND TIMELY RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES, ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH COURT DIRECTIVES, AND BY FOSTERING A VITAL COURT- COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP.

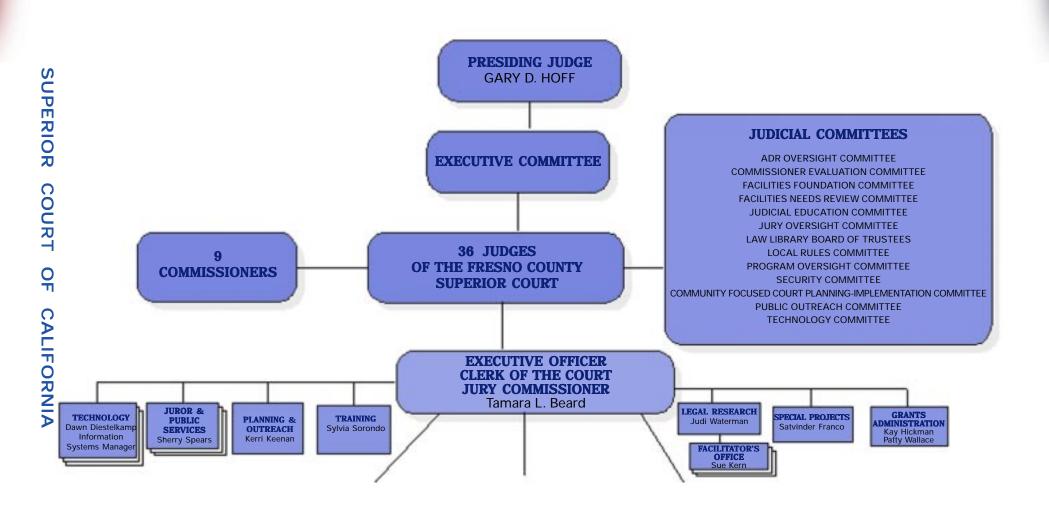
#### **GOALS**

#### ENHANCED OR OPTIMIZED

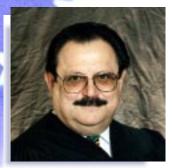
- PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE COURTS
- INDEPENDENCE OF COURT AS A CO-EQUAL BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT
- PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE COURTS
- JURY MANAGEMENT
- CASE AND CALENDAR MANAGEMENT
- COOPERATION WITH OTHER JUSTICE SYSTEM AGENCIES

#### **CORE VALUES**

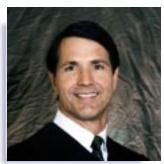
- I. THE COURT WILL ENSURE
  AND MAINTAIN JUSTICE
  ACCORDING TO THE LAW
- II. PROTECT PUBLIC TRUST AND CONFIDENCE
- III. PROTECT INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY
- IV. PROVIDE EQUAL ACCESS TO THE COURT
- V. COMMIT TO THE HIGHEST ETHICAL STANDARD
- VI. PROMOTE EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE
- VII. ENSURE COURTESY TO, RESPECT FOR, AND DIGNITY OF, THE INDIVIDUAL



#### FRESNO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES



Hon. James I. Aaron Traffic



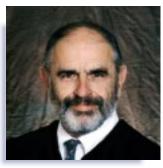
**Hon. Gary S. Austin** Criminal / Civil Trials



Hon. Donald S. Black
Criminal / Civil Trials



**Hon. Carlos A. Cabrera** Fowler & Sanger Branches



**Hon. Dennis Caeton**Juvenile Dependency
(Presiding)



**Hon. Jane A. Cardoza**Kingsburg Branch



**Hon. Fred Dupras**Reedley Branch



**Hon. Wayne R. Ellison**Criminal / Civil Trials



**Hon. Gregory Fain** Juvenile Delinquency



**Hon. John J. Gallagher**Probate / Settlement
Conferences



**Hon. Gene M. Gomes**Criminal / Civil Trials



**Hon. William Kent Hamlin**Preliminary Hearings

#### FRESNO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES



**Hon. Brad R. Hill** Criminal / Civil Trials



**Hon. Gary D. Hoff** (Presiding Judge)



**Hon. Dale Ikeda**Misdemeanors



**Hon. Franklin P. Jones**Criminal / Civil Trials



**Hon. Lawrence Jones**Criminal / Civil Trials



**Hon. Timothy Kams**Juvenile Delinquency
Juvenile Drug Court



**Hon. Stephen J. Kane**Civil Law and Motion



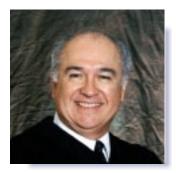
**Hon. Debra Kazanjian** Preliminary Hearings



**Hon. W. Kent Levis** Criminal / Civil Trials



**Hon. Vincent J.McGraw** Selma Branch



**Hon. Ralph Nunez** Criminal / Civil Trials



**Hon. Robert H. Oliver** Criminal / Civil Trials

#### FRESNO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES



**Hon. Gary Orozco**Misdemeanors



**Hon. Harry N. Papadakis** Coalinga & Kerman Branches



**Hon. James Petrucelli** Family Law (Presiding)



**Hon. R. L. Putnam** Criminal / Civil Trials



Hon. James L. Quaschnick
Criminal / Civil Trials



**Hon. Edward Sarkisian, Jr.**Criminal / Civil Trials



**Hon. Dennis R. Scott** Firebaugh Branch



Hon. Alan M. Simpson
Felony Criminal
(Criminal Presiding)



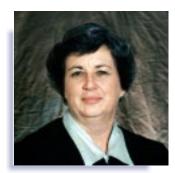
**Hon. M. Bruce Smith** Juvenile Delinquency



**Hon. Mark W. Snauffer**Preliminary Hearings



**Hon. Denise Whitehead** Various Assignments



**Hon. Jane York**Felony Domestic Violence Calendar

#### FRESNO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT COMMISSIONERS



**Hon. Glenda Allen-Hill** Family Support Calendar



**Hon. Brant Bramer** Felony Criminal



**Hon. Nancy A, Cisneros**Adult Drug Court



**Hon. Michael J. Feinberg** Family Support Calendar



Hon. David C. Kalemkarian Family Law



**Hon. Phillip Silva** Family Support Calendar



Hon. Martin Suits, Retired Judge Juvenile Dependency Juvenile Delinquency Drug Court



**Hon. Robert Thompson**Misdemeanors
Limited Civil Law & Motion



**Hon. Edward C. Williams**Clovis Branch

# FRESNO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT Executive Staff



TAMARA L. BEARD EXECUTIVE OFFICER CLERK OF THE COURT JURY COMMISSIONER



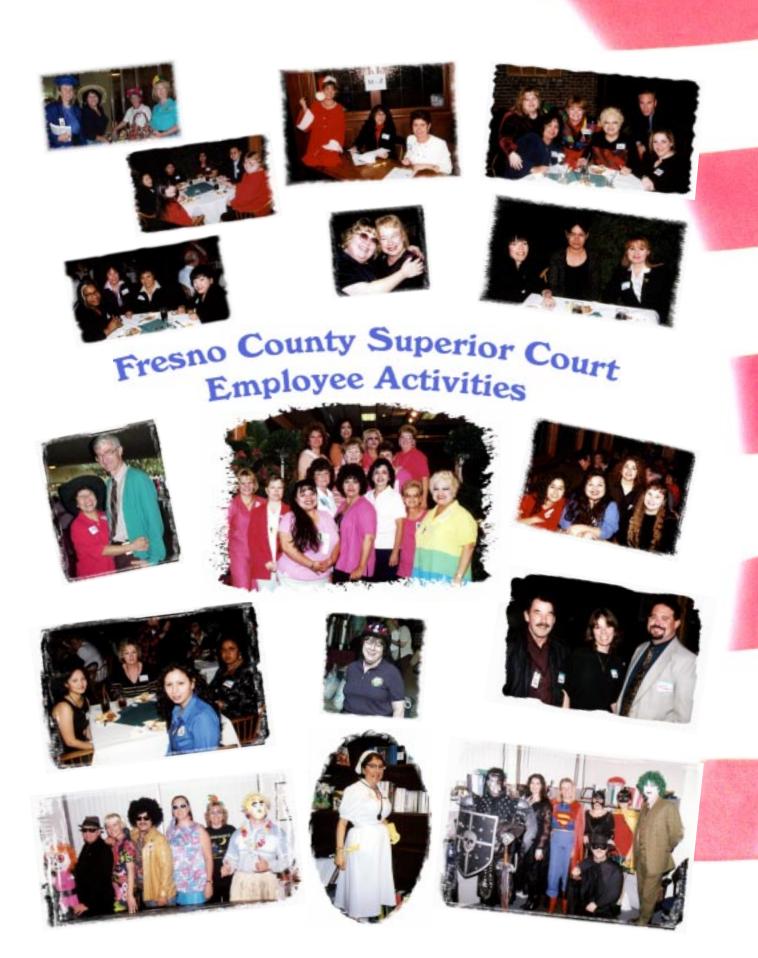
MICHAEL WEINBERG ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE OFFICER



SANDRA SILVA ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE OFFICER



ERNEST PAULINE
ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE OFFICER





#### **2001 STAR PERFORMERS**

The Star Performance Award is a trophy which is awarded to each person/team that is selected by the Court's Employee Recognition Committee from the nominations submitted by other court employees. The trophy stays in the possession of the individual or team selected for one month. Award recipients are encouraged to prominently display the "Star Performer" trophy in their work area. In addition to the trophy, award recipients receive a certificate, "star" post-it notes, and a star-shaped paperweight acknowledging their hard work and dedication above and beyond the call of duty.

#### **JANUARY**

No Nominations Received

#### **FEBRUARY**

No Nominations Received

#### **MARCH**

Alice Pena Roseanne Saliba

#### **APRIL**

Anthony Cervantes
Albert Gonzales

Facilitator's Office Staff

Terentius Banuelos Helen Clark Megan Hager Jerry Haist Belinda Jones Dwynne Keyes Ron Nijmeddin Hilary Rodriguez Roxann Severin-Diaz Alice Talbot

#### MAY

Carlene Brown

Veldonna Wyatt

#### JUNE

Mail Distribution Team
Deanne Crabtree
Veiongo Fakava
Victoria Gonzales
Anne Lucido
Ofelia Tellez

#### **JULY**

Sean Crawford Lisa Marmolejo

#### **AUGUST**

No Nominations Received

#### **SEPTEMBER**

Leticia Hernandez Jeannette Zamorano Mangit Grewal

#### **OCTOBER**

Peggy LaRoche Susan Yepiz Karol Calderon

#### **NOVEMBER**

**Heather Aceves** 

#### **DECEMBER**

Maria Camarillo Tiffany Gonzales

#### GOAL I ~ ACCESS, FAIRNESS, AND DIVERSITY

"All Californians will have equal access to the courts and equal ability to participate in court proceedings, and will be treated in a fair and just manner. Members of the judicial branch community will reflect the rich diversity of the state's residents."

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

In 2001, the Superior Court of Fresno County implemented a multitude of innovative programs and services for the community in an effort to promote access, fairness, and diversity. The Court's accomplishments for the year include:

- Creating a partnership with Central California Legal Services (CCLS) to give the
  public more services in domestic violence cases. Attorneys and paralegals
  from CCLS work in the Family Law Facilitator's Office two days a week to help
  prepare domestic violence petitions.
- Increasing court related services at the Fresno County Health & Human Services' Regional Center at Selma by conducting family court mediations one day each week. This program has been extremely successful, as it is difficult for residents in rural communities to travel to Fresno for these services. The Selma facility is centrally located and hosts a one-stop center for a variety of other county services including public financial assistance, mental health, drug and domestic violence counseling, job skills development, family support, and Superior Court Facilitator and Family Law Information Center (FLIC) services.
- Creating a clinic and individual facilitator services to help people with the
  preparation of guardianship forms. A PowerPoint presentation was developed
  and utilized at the clinic to assist members of the community who cannot fill
  out the paperwork without detailed instructions. This presentation has been
  made available to neighboring counties to assist them in developing a similar
  guardianship clinic. After attendance at the group clinic, individual facilitator
  services are offered.
- Hiring a full-time Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Coordinator to expand court programs for the resolution of civil disputes. The Coordinator also works with other community organizations to develop restorative justice programs.
- Hosting the first "Court-Community" forum designed to inform the professional users of our court system (law enforcement, attorneys, interpreters, drug and other service providers, non-profit related agencies, etc.) about new court programs and services. Approximately 150 people attended this one-day

program and felt the information they received was extremely helpful. The Court plans to look at other ways to promote this dialogue with the community.

- Implementing Bilingual Differential Pay Compensation for employees. The increase
  in base pay allows the Court to compensate these employees who "interpret" as
  they assist people in the Clerk's offices. It also demonstrates this Court's need to
  better communicate with our diverse population.
- Including diversity and cultural awareness as part of our training curriculum. As a result, employees have learned how to be more sensitive to the diverse public they serve. This Court has one of the most extensive in-house employee training programs in the State.
- Expanding the Court's Web site to include: local court rules, a directory of court approved alternate dispute mediators, and links to other court related sites. Most importantly, the Web site added "Court Connect", a program that gives the public online access to legally accessible case related information from any personal computer.
- Upgrading and improving public access computer terminals so that public can access all types of legally accessible case related information in a more efficient and timely manner.
- Creating a "community" based committee to examine ways in which the Court and the legal community can work together to make the court system easier for self-represented litigants.
- Producing English and Spanish brochures explaining court and county related services to the general public. These brochures cover many topics, ranging from Unlawful Detainers to Jury Service.

## CENTRAL CALIFORNIA LEGAL SERVICES (CCLS) ANNUAL AWARD

In 2001, Presiding Judge Gary D. Hoff received the CCLS Annual Award in the Judiciary category. The award honors individuals who provide leadership and support for CCLS and its services in the community. Judge Hoff was recognized for his outstanding dedication to increased access by the public to the judicial system. He has been actively involved in many charitable, educational and cultural organizations, and programs affecting the community. Few measure up to his leadership ability and moderating influence. The Superior Court of Fresno has grown and prospered significantly under his direction. He places particular emphasis on programs involving increased access to the judicial system for all court users, including the unrepresented, attorneys, and even the post-convicted defendants.

#### GRANTS

Mobile Access Project (MAP) – Accepted delivery of the MAP Unit, which became fully operational in October 2001. The use of the MAP has enabled the Court to expand its family law (family support and FLIC grant services) as well as domestic violence restraining order assistance to rural areas of our geographically



large county. The Court also joined forces with CCLS to offer an array of services to rural areas of the county in education, community outreach, self-help and other services that assist both our English and Spanish customers via the MAP. A grant in the amount of \$142,000 was awarded in 2000 by the Judicial Council and received by the Court in 2001.

**Self-represented Litigant Action Planning –** The Judicial Council awarded the Court with a 10-month grant in the amount of \$7,050 to develop a comprehensive plan for self-represented litigants in Fresno County.

<u>"Meet the Court PSA" – In 2001, the Judicial Council of California approved a grant in the amount of \$35,000 for the Court for a series of media based Public Service Announcements (PSAs) describing Court service for both the English and Spanish speaking population. The grant will commence in 2002.</u>

Community Focused Court Planning – The Judicial Council awarded the Court with a one and a half-year grant in the amount of \$7,205. The grant enabled the Court to address public outreach and public confidence, to define and plan an agenda, develop objectives and outcomes, complete an operational plan, implement, and evaluate an action plan.

**Rural Internet Access Project –** The State Bar of California awarded the Court with a 6-month grant in the amount of \$7,161 to provide a laptop and Internet access to pro-per litigants in rural areas of Fresno County for use on the Court's MAP.

#### PILOT PROJECTS

**Family Law Information Center (FLIC) –** The Court was in its third and final fiscal year of involvement in this pilot project. Additional funding of \$70,000 was also awarded to the Court for continued access services to low income litigants in the area of family law in rural areas of Fresno County. Two attorneys have been providing services and access to the courts at various locations throughout the county.

**Telephone Interpreting** – The Court participated in the Judicial Council's Telephone Interpreting Project. Fresno County has a multi-lingual population, which makes "language access" difficult for those members of the community who do not speak English. Current legislation allows the Court to appoint interpreters only in criminal matters. Unfortunately, sometimes it is difficult for the Court to find qualified interpreters, especially in exotic languages, and the Telephone Interpreting Project provides access to a qualified interpreter in almost any language. This means the Court and the public have had immediate access to an interpreter so that cases do not have to be continued until an interpreter can be provided.

#### GOAL II ~ INDEPENDENCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

"The judiciary will be an institutionally independent, separate branch of government that responsibly seeks, uses, and accounts for public resources necessary for its support. The independence of judicial decision making will be protected."

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

The Superior Court has created many new business practices since it became fiscally and operationally independent from the County in January 1998, and unified into one Superior Court in July 1998. Although we still purchase many services from the County, we have also absorbed or "outsourced" many functions and services once provided by others. Most of the Court's funding now comes from the State, but getting money for new programs or services is a slow process. To continue meeting the growing needs of the community, the Court has been creative in how resources are acquired and managed. These are examples of the Court's accomplishments in 2001:

- In 2001, the Court received its first new judicial position since 1986. Unfortunately, this barely scratched the surface for a court which should receive another 26 new judgeships, as recommended by the California Judicial Council. In order to increase our judicial resources, we continued to work closely with the local Bar Associations in Fresno County to encourage local attorneys to donate their time by serving as "pro tem" judges. After an attorney receives judicial training, they can serve as a temporary judicial officer hearing many civil, small claims, juvenile, and family law matters. This program greatly assists the Court and the community because we have more cases than our full-time judges can properly hear. Greatly improved and expanded pro tem training programs were developed in the juvenile and family law areas in 2001.
- The Court created an ADR brochure that explains how parties can use outside mediators to resolve their disputes. This brochure is given to all parties when they file a civil suit. The use of private practice mediators enables the Court to focus upon other time sensitive cases.
- One of the most innovative partnerships the Court supports is the Facilities Foundation. This is an independent group comprised of members of the local Bar Association and art community who formed a non-profit organization to improve all of our courthouse facilities.

The Facilities Foundation donated 100 original artworks, and 90 enlarged and framed photographs of our beautiful Central Valley, valued at over \$170,000. Donated from local artisans, the artworks were placed in areas where the public can enjoy them such as the hallways, deliberation rooms, courtrooms, and the cafeteria.





- The Court increased its efforts to collect fines in outstanding failure-to-appear traffic cases. This program has been extremely successful in ensuring the delivery of justice by requiring all motorists to pay their fines and return "lost" revenues. Additionally, the workload of the Court is reduced as private agency staff now process the cases within the guidelines as established by the Court.
- The Court negotiated and signed separate labor contracts with the Court employees union. This was a major task because labor relations had been a County responsibility until last year and the Court had to develop new personnel policies and procedures. As of January 2001, Court employees are no longer County employees. There were many issues that the Court and the union had to resolve. After several months of negotiations, a fiscally responsible three-year contract is now in place.
- The Court aggressively pursued grant opportunities thereby creating and expanding several new programs and services. This money is separate from trial court operations funding, and gives us more flexibility to establish programs based on local needs. In 2001, the Court operated with approximately \$3,557,387 in grant funding, which represented approximately 8.25% of our total operating budget.
- With self-determination in mind, the Court greatly contributed its staff
  time and expertise in various Judicial Council and Administrative Office
  of the Courts' Committees and Task Forces. The entire State court
  system is going through many transitions in the finance and human
  resource areas. The Superior Court of Fresno County hopes to assist in
  the development of those new policies, agendas, etc.

### GOAL III ~ MODERNIZATION OF MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

"Justice will be administered in a timely, efficient, and effective manner that utilizes contemporary management practices; innovative ideas; highly competent judges, other judicial officers, and staff; and adequate facilities."

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

Modernization and improvement of our operational policies and procedures is a philosophy which is now ingrained in our judges, managers, and staff. Since the "administrative consolidation" of the courts occurred in 1996, those working within our court system have endeavored to think about how to do business better, more innovatively and efficiently. Although many procedures have been streamlined, we continue to recognize many more areas where services can be improved for the public and those "professional users", such as other governmental agencies, profit and non-profit service organizations, etc., who appear at court locations on a regular basis. The Superior Court also continued to focus upon professional development for line, supervisory, and managerial employees, as well as for our judges, commissioners, and pro tem judicial officers. The Court persevered with its endless quest to improve its existing facilities, replace those that are hopelessly outdated and unsuitable for today's needs, and obtain adequate funding for acquisition of additional courthouse location sites to address our future needs.

The following are just some of the Court's accomplishments for the year:

- In pursuance of our goal of having the Court operate within one automated case management system, the BANNER Case Management System (CMS) was expanded to include limited civil, small claims, and juvenile court areas. The entire system was also upgraded, which enabled the Court to implement Web-based and other technologies that provide increased public access to the Court. The Court continued to plan for its expansion of the BANNER CMS to the criminal and traffic areas, which should occur in 2002 and 2003, respectively.
- The Court made available to the public all legally accessible records via the Internet. Those records deemed "public accessible" such as dockets, register of actions, and calendar information were made available in civil, probate, and family law cases. This "Court Connect" program will be expanded to include criminal and traffic matters as those areas are converted to the BANNER CMS.
- The Court adopted a new Case Management Conference process in an effort to streamline and improve the handling of civil cases, as well as to promote the more expeditious disposition of cases. Early Mediation Status

- Conferences were incorporated into the process to ensure the randomness of case selection for the program and make case processing more efficient.
- Various procedural modifications and staff relocations were made in an attempt to further our goal of "one-stop shopping." The Civil Law and Motion desk was restructured so customers would be able to file and calendar their hearings with one counter clerk. Although the Civil Division is still split on two separate floors in the downtown courthouse, some staff was relocated and the space reconfigured so that caseload shifts could be addressed to improve customer service. Many procedures and policies governing the processing of insufficient funds checks, refunds, trust fund accounting, etc. were revised to eliminate duplications of effort. The civil calendaring function was transferred to the Civil Division to provide one-stop shopping.
- The Court continued its court restoration and improvement projects. For the past five years, the Court has followed a scheduled plan of improvements. In 2001, the Court carpeted and painted its downtown courthouse 6th floor courtrooms, public hallways, judges' chambers, and clerk's offices. The Juror Assembly Room also received a fresh coat of paint on its ceiling and the wood paneling was restored. This year all of the judges, commissioners, courtroom clerks, court reporters, judicial secretaries, managerial, and some executive staff received new furniture replacing that which had been utilized since the construction of the downtown courthouse in 1967. The Court also commenced projects involving the replacement of all of its signage for the purpose of increased public access, and replacement of all juror deliberation room furniture in an effort to recognize the importance of and personal sacrifices made by our deliberating jurors. Both projects are expected to be completed in 2002.
- The Court continued to plan future court facility needs by working with Fresno County and the City of Selma on the construction and lease of a new two-courtroom facility. The Court also worked on our goal of acquiring another downtown courthouse facility to serve our future judicial needs. Finally, the Court worked closely with Fresno County on building a new juvenile hall campus to meet the needs of the juvenile justice system for the next 40 years.
- Working with the County and the Sheriff's Office, the Court implemented
  its first two-video arraignment courtrooms. Created out of necessity
  because of the projected eighteen-month closure of the two jail annex
  courtrooms, video equipment was installed in two courtrooms to reduce
  transportation of inmates from the jail to the courthouse for brief
  appearances. After working with this technology, the general opinion is
  that video arraignment courts should be expanded to some outlying court
  locations as funding becomes available.

#### GRANTS

**Multi-agency Informational Database Exchange System –** The Court received a \$100,000 grant to design a multi-agency informational database exchange system so that juvenile delinquency related agencies can share suitable case information. Under the provisions of the grant, this design is to be completed in 2002.

**Juvenile Drug Court** – The State Office of Criminal Justice Planning awarded the Court with a grant in the amount of \$160,470. The grant enabled the Court to remodel juvenile court facilities to facilitate Juvenile Drug Court.

**Storage & Retrieval of Archival Records –** The Judicial Council awarded the Court with a grant of \$20,000 for a consultant and technical services in document storage and archival of court records. The grant was received in 2000 and the service performed in 2001.

Records Management Technical Assistance Consortium – The Court used a portion of this grant, funded by the Judicial Council, to create a floor plan showing the location and number of shelving units at the Archives building. This floor plan is being used to create a database of file numbers and locations as well as an automated inventory of case files to provide the Court with the ability to locate files more easily. The program will enable the Court to visually rearrange floor plans and consider different filing configurations through a computer "model" and will result in improved file archival/retrieval systems and, ultimately, improved service to the public.

**Comprehensive Drug Court Implementation Program –** The Department of Alcohol and Drug awarded the Court with a 4-year grant in the amount of \$889,680. The grant provides funding of a drug court administrator, support staff, and for operational expenses.

#### PILOT PROGRAMS

Mandatory Mediation Program – The Judicial Council awarded the Court with a grant of \$318,424 to enabled the Court to participate as an Urban County in the Mandatory Pilot Mediation Program for certain civil cases.

**Automated Juror Management System –** The Superior Court of Fresno was one of five pilot courts in the State funded by the Judicial Council to convert to one of two State approved automated juror management systems. The cost of implementing the new program was \$242,500, an amount equal to the regular one-year cost of the previous automated system. The annual maintenance cost for this "Jury Plus" system will only be \$30,000 per year – which is 12% of the annual maintenance cost of the previous system. The new system also appears to require less manpower and will enable the Court to reassign current jury office staff to other areas of the Court where staffing shortages exist.

Interactive Voice/Web Response System – Another aspect of the juror management system was the development of an interactive Web and voice-response system. In 2001, the Court committed a significant amount of time planning and designing a model system wherein prospective jurors will be able to call or Web-connect to our automated system and defer their juror service to a specific and acceptable day for them, and find out about their individual juror service, deferral, excuse and payment "history" with the Court. The implementation of this system, which is eagerly anticipated for the spring of 2002, will enable the Court to become much more "user friendly" for prospective jurors. Funding in the amount of \$191,375 was provided to the Court for this project.

#### GOAL IV ~ QUALITY OF JUSTICE AND SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC

"Judicial branch services will be responsive to the needs of the public and will enhance the public's understanding and use of and its confidence in the judiciary."

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

The Court is constantly trying to improve the quality of service to the public even though we need more judges and staff to handle the increasing caseload. According to the 2000 Census, Fresno is the 10<sup>th</sup> largest county in the State and grew 19.8% between 1990 and 2000, compared to an overall growth rate of 13.8% in California. Based upon a comprehensive study conducted in 2001 by the National Center for State Courts, it was determined that Fresno needs an additional 25 judges just to handle its existing caseload. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that our judicial resource issues will be addressed in the immediate future. Consequently, the Court had to become creative in finding ways to "stretch" all of our judicial and non-judicial resources.

Even with limited resources, the Court accomplished the following projects in 2001:

- The Family Court Services Department wrote a training manual for private practice psychologists to use when they conduct evaluations in child custody and visitation cases. Since most of these evaluations are court ordered, Court staff usually conducts them. However, some parties choose to employ the services of their own experts. The use of the training manual will help ensure quality reports which best meet the needs of the Court and consider the best interests of the child(ren).
- Youth Court is a project the Court is continually working on in collaboration with several local school districts. This program provides high school students with an opportunity to serve as "jurors" when one of their peers commits a minor offense. A Superior Court Judge presides over the case while a panel of student jurors reviews the information and sentences the offender. The program teaches students about court operations, civic responsibility, and the consequences of breaking the law. In 2001, the program was greatly expanded in that 16 judges, justices, and commissioners volunteered to participate in this worthwhile project.
- A Findings and Order After Hearing form for family law cases was developed, which
  eliminates the need for attorneys and self-represented parties to prepare an order
  after the court hearing. The form is user-friendly, easy to understand, and allows the
  parties to leave the court with a signed order.
- The Juvenile Drug Court recognized private businesses in the community for their contributions and support. Both State and local representatives attended the public forum and former drug court participants shared with the audience how much the program changed their lives. The forum was an opportunity for the public to see how

the Juvenile Court Drug Program is a community project that makes a positive difference.

- The Local Rules Committee, with participation from judges, staff, and local attorneys, revised Civil Rules governing the Court's delay reduction procedures. This new Rule ensures the timely disposition of civil cases and reduces backlogs in the Court.
- The Court developed a "self-help" packet for plaintiffs filing Small Claims actions.
  The packet provides the public with clear instructions for filling out forms which
  has increased the quality of the submitted information. As a result, the Court is
  able to provide an earlier court date. Customer satisfaction has increased as has
  Court productivity and the quality of justice provided.
- The Court hired student interns from the San Joaquin College of Law to assist with the preparation of orders immediately after hearing in domestic violence cases. Many people try to represent themselves in these cases, either because they can not afford an attorney or do not want to hire one. These parties often become confused with court directions once their case is heard. This program helps the parties by assisting them with understanding court terminology, thus ensuring that correct forms and documents are timely filed, and the orders of the Court are more likely to be followed.

#### RALPH N. KLEPS AWARD

The Superior Court of Fresno County was awarded the Ralph N. Kleps award in 2001 by the Judicial Council of California for the Keep Kids In School program, also known as KKIS. The Judicial Council has presented this award each year since 1991. The award was created in honor of the first administrative director of the California courts to recognize and honor the contributions made by individual courts to the administration of justice. Keep Kids In School is an aggressive early intervention program that targets truant youth who, by definition, are more likely to drop out of school. The primary focus of KKIS is to view poor school attendance as a symptom and not the problem, thus the interventions which include counseling, recreation and tutoring are designed to build resiliency in targeted children. Truancy has become a strong indicator of youth tendencies toward drug use and violent behavior. When kids start missing school, they are sending a strong message to the community that they are in trouble and need help if they are to succeed in life. Proacting to truancy is one of the first ways a community can reach out quickly to a family in trouble. Since the problem of chronic truancy is a community issue, KKIS was developed through the cooperative efforts of the following agencies: Fresno County Superior Court, Fresno Unified School District, Fresno County Volunteer Bureau, the District Attorney's Office, the Probation Department, attorneys willing to provide pro bono services, Boys & Girls Clubs, Comprehensive Youth Services, Target Stores, and St. Agnes Medical Center's Footsteps program. Collaboration combined with enforcement and accountability has made KKIS a unique and powerful program for combating school truancy and keeping schools safer.

#### **GRANTS**

**Safewatch** – The Judicial Council awarded the Court with a 1-year grant in the amount of \$36,433. The grant enabled the Court to provide low/no cost supervised visitation and exchange services to non-custodial parents in the family law courts. Comprehensive Youth Services was hired as the Court's service provider.

**Dependency Family Treatment Court –** The Office of Justice Program awarded a 1-year grant in the amount of \$30,000. The grant enables the Court to train 20 dependency staff members including judges in the area of Family Treatment Courts. The training team traveled to Florida, Maryland and New York and took advantage of the expertise of existing courts and the Federal Government.

**Drug Court Treatment Related Partnership** – The Department of Alcohol and Drug awarded the Court with a 6-month grant of \$332,000 for the purpose of funding the PC 1000 Deferred Entry of Judgement Drug Court.

**Youth Court –** The Court applied for and received a 7-month grant in the amount of \$58,913. The grant enables the Court to continue and expand operations of a Youth Court at four sites in Fresno. The grant also funds a Youth Court Coordinator position and the development of Pubic Services Announcements to highlight related services.

**Family Treatment Court** – The Court received a 9-month grant in the amount of \$9,000, which enabled the Court to hire a coordinator to develop a model for Dependency Court to provide structure for Family Treatment Court. The coordinator will develop the goals, structure, and process that could be utilized and make recommendations to the Court.

**Community Services Fund –** The Court received a 1-year grant from the Fresno Metropolitan Rotary Club in the amount of \$1,000 to provide incentives and rewards for successful participants of Juvenile Drug Court.

Juvenile Drug Court – The Court received a 1-year Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant (JAIBG) from the Office of Criminal Justice Planning in the amount of \$337,502. The grant enables the Court to provide continued services for Juvenile Drug Court as well as create the structure within the Juvenile Delinquency Court system to link criminal justice agencies to the Court in an information-sharing project.

**Juvenile Drug Court –** The Court received a 9-month mini-grant from the Judicial Council in the amount of \$33,333. The grant enabled the Court to provide a continuum of Juvenile Drug Court treatment services.

**Hotel Kids** – The Court applied for and received approval from the Judicial Council for a Collaborative Justice grant in the amount of \$80,000 to provide judicially supervised substance abuse treatment outreach for those children in the dependency court system who have exhibited substance abuse involvement. The grant will commence in 2002.

#### GOAL V ~ EDUCATION

"The effectiveness of judges, court personnel, and other judicial branch staff will be enhanced through high quality continuing education and professional development."

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

The Superior Court of Fresno continued to work towards achieving its goals in developing educational standards for judges, commissioners, and court personnel by promoting professional development and continuing education programs. Since the quality of justice administered by the State's courts is directly related to the quality and competence of the people who work in the judicial branch, the primary objective of these programs is to provide dynamic learning opportunities that enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities of all staff, and improving the Courts' ability to provide services to internal and external constituencies. The Fresno County Superior Court strives to meet the Judicial Council's goal of providing court personnel with knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable them to administer the justice system in a fair and effective manner that fosters public trust and confidence through a comprehensive program of judicial education and training for court employees.

The following accomplishments were made in 2001:

- A Training Coordinator position was created to implement structured and consistent employee training and education programs. The Employee Orientation Program continued to be successful and progressive in the orientation of all new court employees. All new (and some current) employees are required to now attend a halfday session each week for ten weeks to learn about the provisions within the Court's Personnel Manual, sexual harassment prevention, safety measures, etc.
- The Court created the "Supervisory Continuing Education Group". The Court realized that more than half of its 34 supervisors were newly assigned to their positions and, thus, additional development was required. Training topics included: Performance Appraisals, Employee Motivation, Hiring and Selection, and Supervisors' Roles and Responsibilities. The goal of the on-going sessions is to educate supervisors and provide them with the tools and guidelines necessary to effectively supervise their staff.
- The labor market in the Central Valley is very depressed. Few applicants have any experience working in the complex justice system. As a result, the need for a Judicial Assistant Academy was conceptualized and an extensive curriculum was developed. The planning for this innovative new program by the training coordinator and numerous other Court staff required a significant investment in time and effort. This program will have a positive long-term impact on the Court and the employees who complete the Academy, which is scheduled to begin in March 2002.

- Further efforts to enhance the Court's efficiency included the offering of three Mediation Training Seminars for individuals interested in joining the Court's Roster of Mediators for the Early Mandatory Mediation pilot project. In September, a special 15-hour training session was conducted for judges only. It was attended by ten judges from the Superior Court and two justices from the 5<sup>th</sup> District Court of Appeal.
- Another example of the Court's continuing efforts to provide comprehensive education and training programs for court personnel included the attendance at the National Association of Drug Court Professionals' 7th Annual Training/Conference by the Adult Drug Court Team. This training greatly enhanced the effectiveness and understanding of each team member's role. The Team then participated in a site visit to the San Diego Superior Court's Mentor/Juvenile Drug Court which provided them with an opportunity to observe, solicit ideas, and implement strategies in our local Juvenile Drug Court.
- The judges and commissioners of this Court enthusiastically supported the creation of a continuing judicial officer educational series in the areas of Emergency Protective Orders, Civil Law and Motion, Mediation, Probate, Jury Selection, and Domestic Violence. The series is now on-going.
- Alternative approaches to delivering judicial branch education services were expanded by introducing distance education through satellite conferencing in the year 2001. Topics included "Jury Strategies for Judges" and Professional Development courses for staff.

#### **GRANTS**

**Technical Assistance Training** – In a \$35,500 grant funded by the Judicial Council, the Fresno, Riverside and San Bernardino Superior Courts created two separate three-day intensive supervisory training programs designed to meet the needs of all three courts. The course outlines can be used by each of the three courts for new supervisors in the future.

**Management Development Assessment Center –** The Court applied for and received approval from the Judicial Council for a grant in the amount of \$20,000 for a succession and employee assessment program. The grant will commence in 2002.

#### GOAL VI ~ TECHNOLOGY

"Technology will enhance the quality of justice by improving the ability of the judicial branch to collect, process, analyze, and share information and by increasing the public's access to information about the judicial branch."

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

The Superior Court of Fresno County is committed to improving the public's access to the courts and the court's service to the public. The Court is continuously working to enhance access and service through technology. The Court accomplished its goal of ensuring that it would continue to provide seamless, quality service to the public in the year 2001 and beyond.

The Judicial Council's long-range strategic plan calls for modernization of judicial administration practices and specifies areas in which technology can be used to achieve this goal. Building on that, numerous technological advances to enhance public service and access to the Court were achieved in 2001 and many additional projects are currently under way:

- The installation and production of a new and more innovative automated Jury system from Jury Systems, Inc. "Jury+ Next Generation" allowed Jury personnel to more efficiently and cost effectively manage its jury system.
- The Court created a new automated database for Family Law Facilitators that allowed them to input into a Microsoft Access database the same information previously entered manually onto paper forms. This database allows for immediate breakdown by category of all aspects of client demographics.
- Several other departments within the Court were introduced to the various Microsoft Access databases to allow for the completion of the following tasks:
  - ₹ Tracking and random selection of three attorneys for categories of cases business, insurance, personal injury, probate, and real estate assigned to arbitration.
  - ₹ Tracking and reporting of miscellaneous cases in Juvenile Dependency and Delinquency Divisions.
  - ₹ Tracking and reporting of deposited wills and miscellaneous filings for Probate.
  - ★ Tracking and reporting of Projected Case Completion for Limited Civil.

- Creation of a zip code database containing all zip codes for Fresno County and corresponding distances from Fresno for use in the automatic payment of juror mileage reimbursement.
- Installation and configuration of an on-line (Web-based) calendar schedule for Court Mediators.
- In order to keep the Court on the leading edge of technology, a new Case Management System (CMS), BANNER 3.1, was implemented and then upgraded to Courts 4.1, allowing the Court to implement Web-based and other technologies that provide better access for the public, and more effective and improved case management.
- Several additions and improvements were made to the Court's Web page, which can be accessed at <a href="http://www.fresno.ca.gov/2810/default.htm">http://www.fresno.ca.gov/2810/default.htm</a>. Information on the site was expanded to include the following:
  - ★ Local Rules posting in PDF format to allow the printing of the complete rules and updating the set that already exists.
  - ★ Local forms and links to Judicial Council forms.
  - ← The Alternative Dispute Resolution Department created its own Web site which explains the pilot program for Early Mandatory Mediation, lists the Roster of Mediators, and includes all necessary forms needed for the program.
  - ₹ Family Law and Juvenile Court sections were added.

  - ★ An on-line CD Archive for Civil Unlimited cases (1989 and older) was made available on the public terminals.
  - Tracking within the CMS to differentiate red light violations captured by a videobased automated enforcement system from other citations filed by the Fresno Police Department.
  - ★ Six educational satellite broadcast sites for Distance Learning that enable staff and judges to receive broadcasted educational materials from any one of six court locations.

- ₹ Realtime Court Reporting Services in the courtrooms that enable judicial officers to view the court reporters' notes, bookmark entries, refer back to proceedings, and provide better public service while monitoring court proceedings. The project is expected to be completed in 2002.
- ← Upgraded Public Access Terminals from "dumb" terminals to full PCs that now access all three of our case management systems.

#### GRANTS

**Self-help** – The Judicial Council awarded the Court with a \$19,940 grant for the purpose of providing technology support of its CCLS domestic violence related grant in the form of court computers and video conferencing at rural sites, and a telephone voice response system for family law facilitator services.

**E-mobility/Web Access** – The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District awarded the Court a 1-year grant in the amount of \$297,000 to develop Internet based applications that enable public transactions including e-filing, payment of fees, forms acquisition, case and calendar status.

Family Violence – A Model for Social Justice – The Court received a 9-month grant in the amount of \$66,126 from Proposition 10. The grant enabled the Court to build a technology-based model within the court system in the departments that hear cases involving domestic and family violence matters. The plan will focus on children 0-5 years of age and was received from the Children's and Families Commission of Fresno County. This is a planning grant that will define structure, needs and future operations between coordination agencies.

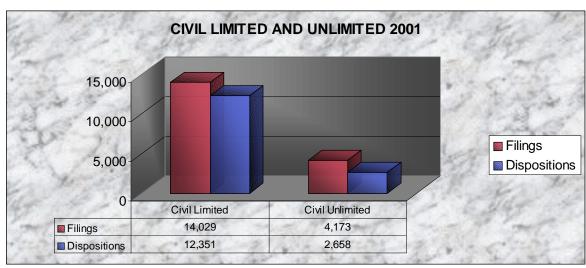
**Regional Technology Analyst** – The Administrative Office of the Courts awarded the Central-Coastal-Eastern-Desert (CCED 20) Technology Regional Group with two year funding at \$100,000 per year for the purpose of hiring a Technology Analyst. Under the supervision of the CCED Board of Directors and the host court, Fresno, the analyst is responsible for helping the entire region to identify and accomplish a strategic plan of action toward the acquisition and usage of advanced technology systems.

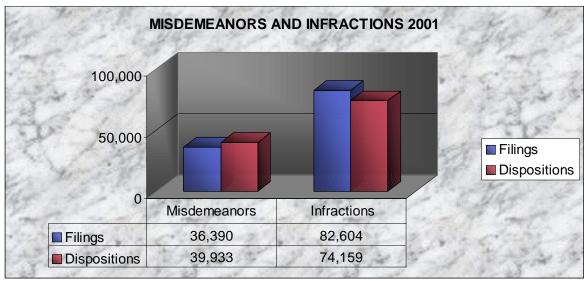
# FRESNO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT STATISTICAL REPORTING via JBSIS

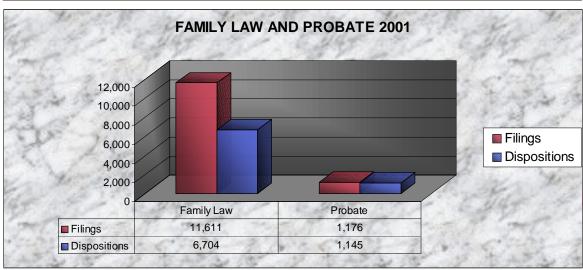
or years the California courts have been in a weak position as far as statistical analysis and comparison is concerned. The information we were required to gather was confusing, outdated and incomplete. Recognizing these problems, the California Judicial Council revised its requirements for the gathering and reporting of this information. The Judicial Branch Statistical Information System (JBSIS) is the by-product of many years of evaluation of needs and functionality/automation compatibility, as well as for statewide implementation. Utilizing the JBSIS standards, each Court must, as their case management system (CMS) allows, document the type and number of cases processed through the trial courts as well as the number and types of court events that occur in the life of a case. The objective is to maximize data collection efforts while minimizing court staff involvement in the collection process by linking data collection with the courts' case management systems. The JBSIS system consists of multiple reports covering various areas of law and focuses on the following major areas: caseload/caseflow, workload, and case characteristics (case complexity such as whether an interpreter was needed, etc.).

While some of the statistical elements required in the new JBSIS reporting scheme are the same as those that were required in the old data collection standards, many reports, case types, and case categories have been further broken down and refined. For example, the single "Juvenile" category in the old reporting system is now divided into "Juvenile Delinquency" and "Juvenile Dependency", each with their own case breakdowns by category. "General Civil" is now broken down into many different filing categories that did not previously exist. The creation of new and different categories means that to report current (JBSIS) and past (pre-JBSIS) case statistical information would be tantamount to comparing apples to oranges. For this reason, we are only reporting the filings and dispositions of cases for the year 2001.

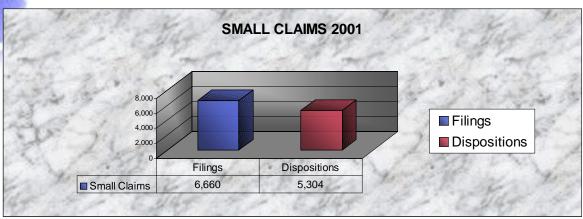
#### STATISTICAL DATA FOR 2001

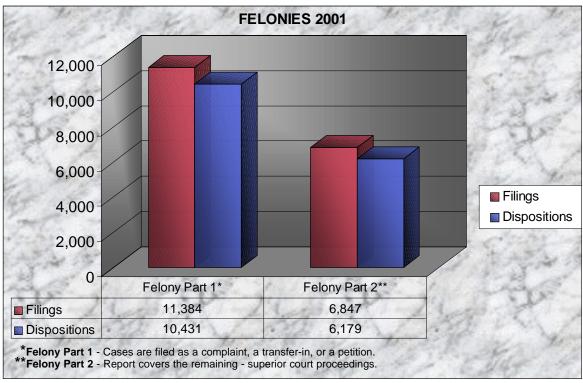


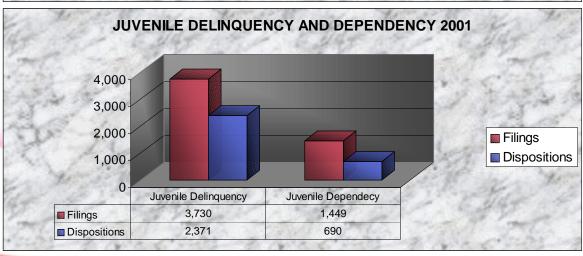




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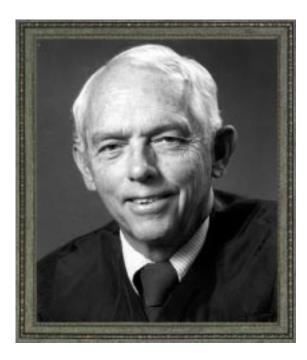




#### DONALD ROSS FRANSON 1926 - 2001

Judge Donald Ross Franson was born in Riverside, California on March 31, 1926. He attended Oakland High School and graduated in 1943. After graduating from high school, he entered the University of California, Berkeley. Judge Franson graduated with a degree in Business in 1947 and moved to San Francisco to attend the University of CA, Hastings College of Law. Upon his graduation in 1951, he moved to Fresno.

Following several years as a Deputy District Attorney for Fresno County, he entered private practice, where he later became a partner with the firm of Miles, Sears and Franson, from 1955 through 1965. As a young attorney, Judge Franson was active in many civic and political organizations. He was appointed Bankruptcy Judge for the United States Bankruptcy Court in 1965,



and in 1967, was appointed by Governor Reagan to the Fresno County Superior Court. He was later appointed to the Firth District Court of Appeal in 1972, and was named Presiding Justice of that court in 1987.

Following his formal retirement from the court in 1990, Judge Franson continued to work at his old courts, leaving time for reading history, travel and golf.



#### ROBERT ZACK MARDIKIAN 1933 - 2001

Judge Robert Zack Mardikian was born on February 25, 1933, in Detroit, Michigan. His family moved to Fresno in 1947, and he graduated from Roosevelt High School in 1950. In 1954, he received a bachelor's degree from Fresno State. He earned his law degree in 1957 from Hastings College, where he was president of his third-year class. From 1958 to 1974, he was a lawyer in private practice in Fresno.

Judge Mardikian served for more than 20 years in Fresno County Courts. He was appointed to the Fresno Municipal Court in 1974 by Governor Reagan and to the Fresno County Superior Court by Governor Jerry Brown three years later. He ran unopposed for his judicial seat three times.

Judge Mardikian was presiding judge from July 1983 to July 1986. He retired as a Superior Court judge in July 1994 but continued to serve on the bench.

Judge Mardikian was known best for his fairness and sensitivity concerning people. He cared about doing the right thing.